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THE GULL

MONTHLY BULLETIN

GOLDEN GATE AUDUBON SOCIETY INC.

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Volume 57 Berkeley, California November 1973 Number 11

NOVEMBER GENERAL MEETING

Thursday, November 8, 1973, at 7:30 P.M.

The Hall of Flowers, 9th Avenue and Lincoln Way, San Francisco.

The November program will present Mr. Wayne Roderick, of the California Native Plant Society, in the first of a series of Know Your Environment programs. Mr. Roderick is with the University of California Botanical Garden in Berkeley. He will bring specimens of native plants. The importance of certain plants to bird life will be one of his subjects.

—DOLORES JOHNSON, *Program Chairperson*

DECEMBER DINNER MEETING

A special dinner program will be held **Thursday, December 6, at 6 P.M.** in the First Unitarian Church, Franklin and Geary Streets, San Francisco. The cost of the ham dinner is $2.00.

Mr. Clerin Zumwalt, formerly with Audubon Canyon Ranch and presently with the Marin Municipal Water District, will give a program illustrated with slides, titled *Travels of a Drop of Water.*

Everyone interested in attending the dinner should return the reservation form below. Please indicate if you are able to bring a salad or dessert to serve eight. For those who will need a ride home, there is a space to check.

Reservations should be sent to Miss Erline Hevel, 425 Ulloa Street, San Francisco, 94127.

NAME..... No. in Party.....

ADDRESS .....

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Covel's Conservation Corner

FALCONRY: The proposed falconry regulations published in the Federal Register for July 1973, appear far too liberal. We had hoped these regulations would follow a more restricted pattern like that in force in California (though we are having a big problem enforcing our code). Provisions like those permitting 12-year old "beginner falconers" to possess a number of Buteo species, including Harris and Zone-tailed Hawks,

would seem inimical to the survival to these species. We also do not understand the inclusion of all owls for falconry. If falconry is to continue in this country, the proposed system of examining and grading falconers as "Beginner", "General" and "Master" licensees appears sound; but unless federal funds are provided, it is unlikely that the state permitting falconry could carry out such costly control programs. Reports from Canada inform me that falcon nest-robbing and trafficking are rampant despite efforts by several provinces to license and control the sport. Contrast the privileges suggested for falconers under the proposed federal regulations with those of ordinary birdlovers who rescue orphaned or injured songbirds and wish to keep them. Or consider the gardener or farmer who may need to control depredating species such as crows or jays. Such citizens must either break the law or wait patiently for permits which may never be granted. Yet falconers, under the proposed regulations, might wipe out many raptor species where neither state or federal agents could properly police them.

Several California Audubon Societies, a section of the Sierra Club and other groups are circulating an appeal to halt the issuance of falconry permits pending a statewide raptor population study. They ask interested persons to write members of the State Fish and Game Commission. Commissioners names are listed on the appeal sheet or they are available from your Conservation Chairman.

BAIRD ISLAND: The State Lands Commission announced on September 28, approval of an exchange of an 800 acre section of Blair Island and a 132 acre marsh strip along Redwood Shores, owned by Mobile Oil Company, for a parcel of Redwood City lands. This bay shore acreage should be conveyed by that commission to the Department of Fish and Game and eventually to federal control as part of the San Francisco Bay Wildlife Refuge. Mobile Oil, however, will retain ownership of the far eastern section of Blair Island where three heron species nest – about 1000 nests where counted there in 1973. Contrary to a press story, reliable sources inform us that Mobil Oil Company has *not* given the federal government 120 acres of Blair Islands. So far, the federal government holds title only to some 214 acres in the Santa Clara County shoreline opposite Coyote Hills. The current congressional appropriation of $90,000 will be spent on land appraisals, not on purchases.

OIL SUMPS: The Audubon sponsored exposé of the tragic wildlife tolls claimed by the San Joaquin Valley oil sumps must have shaken up many Californians, including a majority of the Legislature. AB 2209 was passed by overwhelming votes in both houses and sent to Governor Reagan for signature. The measure would compel speedy cleanup of these ghastly open traps.

EAST BAY PARKS: An article titled "Parks for Tomorrow" in a recent Sierra Club *Yodeler,* reminds us that all open-space proponets should examine the Overview proposals and attend the East Bay Regional Park planning meetings. Vital, irrevocable decisions are being made.

–PAUL COVEL, *Conservation Chairman*

A PLANT SALE

Of special interest to readers of the *Gull* is the annual sale of the California Native Plant Society to be held Saturday, November 17, from 10 A.M. to 3 P.M. at the Brazilian Room in Tilden Park, Berkeley.

This is a wonderful chance to begin a native plant garden or to add plants to an established garden. Native plants are easy to maintain and they are especially attractive to our bird population. Be sure and come early as this is a very popular event. —ED.

Bay Area Birds

The purpose of the Field Observations section of this column is to report birds that are *unusual* or *uncommon* where they are found; we will not be publishing birds of normal occurance. If you would like to know what birds are expected where in Northern California, I strongly recommend *Birds of Northern California* by McCaksie and DeBenedictis. This field-guide sized pamphlet is a bargain at $1.00 ppd. from GGAS or this column. I would also suggest a subscription to *American Birds*, available from National Audubon for $6.00 year.

PESCADERO MARSH

This is a beautiful marsh about 15 miles south of Half Moon Bay on Hwy. 1; it is the only extensive estuary along the San Mateo County coast. Look for Pescadero State Beach and park just before crossing the bridge over Pescadero Creek. You can bird the beach and open ocean, but across the road to the east is the marsh and some fine birding. The flats under the bridge harbor many shorebirds, including the rarer Baird's and Pectral Sandpipers earlier in the fall. Egrets and herons are common out in the marsh, and this is one of the few places on the coast that American Bitterns can be regularly found. Waterfowl are abundant in season, and Wood Ducks and Mallards nest. Tricolored Blackbirds have been found here.

If you'd like, get back in your car, drive south across the bridge, and make the first left. Drive a short way to the dump on the right of the road; on the left will be a sign on a gate that says "Duck Club". There is no longer a duck club there, but it is private property and the owner occasionally hunts, so it is not suggested that you cross the fence. But from the road, you should see most of the ducks that occur in Northern California. The shrubs along the road also have produced a few migrant warblers.

Now that I've convinced you that this is a fine marsh that deserves more extensive coverage by birders, here's the kicker. One third of the area (the beach side) belongs to the State Dept. of Parks & Recreation; the other two thirds is in private hands. Therefore, the fate of this rare habitat is in limbo, especially since the state has mentioned turning it

into a small boat harbor! Both Sequoia Audubon and Nature Conservancy have expressed interest in the area, but so far nothing has come of it.

Our best hope for preserving this choice spot is to bird it as best we can, and let the proper people know how well used the marsh is by birds. The local park rangers are well aware of the value of the area, and plans are afoot to have a bird-watching blind constructed (with volunteer labor) by March, as well as nature trails through the area.

If you feel as I do that this area is invaluable, write Wm. Penn Mott, Dir., Cal. Dept. of Parks and Rec., Box 2390, Sacto., CA 95618, and tell him how you feel. If you would like to help work on protecting the area, contact Ranger Ray Patton, 95 Kelly Ave., Half Moon Bay 94019. And please send all interesting bird sightings to Bay Area Birds.

FIELD OBSERVATIONS

Pale-footed Shearwater, Sept. 29, boat trip off Half Moon Bay, TC, BE et al.

Manx Shearwater, Oct. 7, GGAS boat trip off Monterey.

American Golden Plovers have been very numerous; max. of 50 at Eureka on Sept. 29; also seen at Pt. Reyes, Pescadero, Monterey, and a rare Central Valley record at Woodland through early Oct.

Pectoral Sandpipers have been numerous too; up to 30 at Pescadero Sept. 23 & 27, RD, JM, KG, VR; and 28 at Woodland, Oct. 8, RD, KG, VR, DR.

Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, Woodland, early Oct., DAG, many others.

Thick-billed Murres, up to 3 just off the Monterey Coast Guard Pier since Sept. 14, AB, many others.

Xantus' Murrelet, 2 from Ohlone Audubon boat trip on Monterey Bay, Oct. 6.

Tufted Puffin, 1 from GGAS boat trip off Monterey Sept. 23; also 1 from Ohlone boat trip on Monterey Bay, Oct. 6.

Vaux's Swifts, up to 460 a day from Pt. Diablo through Sept.

Tropical Kingbirds on Pt. Pinos; 1 on Sept. 27, KG et al.; 1 on Oct. 6, TM et al.

Blue-grey Gnatcatchers still being reported at Pt. Diablo through late Sept.

Vagrant warblers: at Rodeo Lagoon and Battery Wallace have been a *Black-throated Blue* (Oct. 1 & 2, TDeK, MD, et al.), and a *Chestnut-sided* (Oct. 5, BF); from Pt. Pinos, a *Palm* (Oct. 7, RS et al.), and a *Magnolia* and a *Black and White* (Sept. 29, DR); at the Carmel River Mouth were a *Prairie* and a *Hooded* (Oct. 7, JL, RS, et al.); at Pt., Reyes., another *Black and White* (Oct. 7, DR); and from the Farallones, a *Pine* (mid-Sept., RS); both *Blackpolls* and *American Redstarts* were reported from all along the coast.

Unusual sparrows: a *Clay-colored* was on Bolinas Mesa (Sept. 17, PRBO); a *Swamp* was at Rodeo Lagoon, (Oct. 8 - BY); and a *Brewer's* was at Battery Wallace (Oct. 9, JM).

Observers: Alan Baldridge, Ted Chandik, Madeline Dumbach, Richard Dean, Tiny DeKay, Bruce Elliott, Bud Fry, David A. Gaines, Kim Garrett, John Luther, Tim Manolis, Joe Morlan, Point Reyes Bird Observatory, Van Remsen, Don Roberson, Rich Stallcup, Bob Yutzy.

—BILL PRINCIPE, *Bay Area Birds Editor.*

NOVEMBER FIELD TRIPS

Sunday, November 4: Take Hwy. 101 north, and turn east on Hwy. 37 toward Napa. Cross the Petaluma River Bridge, and in 4 miles, cross the Tolay Creek Bridge. Park immediately on the other side near a locked gate for **Tubbs Island,** a Nature Conservancy project. (You may approach via Vallejo and Hwy. 37). We will caravan through the gate at **9 A.M.** and the gate will be locked behind us. (If it rains, the trip is cancelled as the road is impassible). We will walk about 2 level miles for shorebirds, waterfowl, and bitterns. Leader: Raymond Higgs (355-6264).

Saturday, November 10: Meet at **9:30 A.M.** at the first parking lot inside Doran State Beach at **Bodega Bay** - about one mile south of the town of Bodega Bay. (Have 50¢ for the toll gate). We will bird on Doran Peninsula, Bodega Lagoon, and Bodega Head, and do little walking. We will see loons and other pelagics, and shorebirds. Leader; Jim Clayton (524-2917).

Wednesday, November 14: Tubbs Island again. See above for directions Leader: Ruth Dement (527-7923).

Sunday, November 18: Meet at the Pt. Reyes Nat'l. Seashore Hqtrs. in Olema on Sir Francis Drake Blvd. west of hwy. 1 at 9 A.M. We will caravan over the new road to **Limontour.** There will be a long walk along the beach to see ducks, herons, loons, and shorebirds. Bring your lunch in a knapsack. Leader: S. S. Whitehead (933-3390).

Saturday, November 24: Meet at 43rd and Fulton at 9 A.M. to see **Golden Gate Park** and the Chain of Lakes. We should see Wood Ducks. Leader: Erline Hevel (661-4251).

The no-leader trips meet on **Thursday, November 8** at the Little Farm in **Tilden Park,** and **Wednesday, November 28** at Academy of Seienees in **Golden Gate Park.** Both meet at **9 A.M.** and both choose their own leader. **Saturday and Sunday, December 1 and 2:** There is an over-night field trip to **Sacramento Wildlife Refuge** and **Grey Lodge.** Make reservations NOW for Saturday night at Markay Motel (916 846-3768) or the Pacific Motel (916 846-9915), both in Gridley, or try Buckner's Motel, in Biggs (916 868-5410). Mention Audubon. If you want to eamp, go to Colusa-Sacramento Campground just ½ mile from Colusa. It will cost $1.50 for the night. If you can't come for the weekend, come for one day (Driving time from the Bay Area; 3 hours). On Saturday, meet at the Sacramento Wildlife Refuge, 7 miles south of Willows, at **9 A.M.** Drive via Interstate 5, take the Norman exit, and meet at the entrance to the Refuge. On Sunday, meet at the Grey Lodge Waterfowl Refuge at **9 A.M.** Approach via

Hwy. 99, and follow the signs out of Live Oak or Gridley. We will eat Saturday night at the Western Smorgy in Gridley (all you can eat for $1.99). They will prepare a box lunch for Sunday on request. Leader: Harry Adamson (283-2164).

—PAT TRIGGS, *Field Trips Chairman*

CHRISTMAS COUNT

This year's Oakland Christmas Count will be held on **Sunday, December 16.** If you would like to participate on the count, write Van Remsen, Christmas Count compiler, at 373 Gravatt Dr., Berkeley 94705 and tell him (1) if you would like to lead a group or be a follower, (2) how well you know the local birds, (3) and what area you would like to cover. You definitely do *not* have to be an expert to participate, but you should keep in mind that the Count is *not* the place to expect instruction from others in your party, since this takes up time better spent finding more birds.

Especially needed this year are people willing to spend part or all the day censusing residential areas near their homes. Also, if you have a feeder in the count circle (7.5 mile radius centered at Arima and Vista in Piedmont), please write Van if you are willing to spend even a few minutes on Dec. 16 counting the birds in your yard. If you have a neighbor with a feeder, ask him if he would be willing to participate. If you have a feeder, but can't be home on Dec. 16, or if you don't feel you know the birds, we can still have someone census your feeder for you.

If you've never participated in a Christmas Count, be sure and do so this year; most birders look forward to it. Also try to join one of the other Bay Area Counts. The Hayward Count is scheduled for Saturday, Dec. 15. Call Bill Hurd at 656-2556 for details. The Contra Costa Count will be held on Saturday, Dec. 29. Call Jean Richmond at 837-2843.

From Your President's Stockpile

BUDGET PROBLEMS; A CPA audit of our books was released in August and published in your September *Gull.* A careful study of the GGAS statement of changes in fund balances for the fiscal year June 1, 1972-May 31, 1973 will show: The year began with $16,987.50 cash in banks (exclusive of the Life Membership Reserve) plus $4,967.00 of receipts received in the previous year but deposited late. Thus, at the beginning of the year there was $21,954.50. At the end of the year the cash balance was $12,711.79. (our operating expenses for all programs was approximately $38,000). Expenditures during the year exceeded income by $9,242.71. Should a similar deficit be incurred in 1973-74, the cash balance would be down to approximately $3,500.00. A third year of such deficit spending would see the society bankrupt.

Our Board meetings on September 5 and on October 2, plus two prolonged special committee meetings and innumerable hours of independent work, have gone into trying to arrive at a budget which would keep to a minimum further drains on our financial reserves. We also considered ways of augmenting our income. As yet no Board agreement has been reached. The membership will be kept informed as to the Board's resolution of our budgetary problems.

POINT PINOLE: Your past-president, Claire Johnson, and I officially represented GGAS at the dedication ceremonies at Point Pinole Regional Park. Our affable six foot four Secretary of the Interior Morton (in a green jacket and known informally as "The Jolly Green Giant") flew in by helicopter. Prior to the dedication ceremonies we visited the salt-water marsh which the district was able to add to the park as a result of a check from GGAS which was transmitted to us by the National office from the estate of Capt. George Whittell. It was pleasant walking down the pickleweed path with Secretary Morton (discussing how pickleweed "makes its living") and to have the opportunity to discuss informally with two of the trustees of the Whittell estate, Peter W. Lace and Kenneth Ashcraft, and with the General Manager of the East Bay Regional Park, Mr. Robert Trudeau, matters of immediate interest to GGAS.

ENERGY CONFERENCE: The Oakland Museum on October 3-5 held a three day invitational gathering on the power and energy question entitled "The Energy Crisis— Who Owns the Sun". The conference brought together an array of distinguished spokesmen from business and industry, science, conservation, environmental and public interest groups who addressed journalists and press representatives on a wide number of power and energy topics. As president of GGAS, I was asked to chair the Thursday afternoon's session which focused on new resources and power conservation.

—G. R. MACHLIS, *President*

MEMORIAL GIFTS

Gifts of remembrance were made to Audubon Canyon Ranch

In Memory of:	Gift of:
Mrs. Florence Richardson	Violet & George Homem
Nicholas de Timofeev	Marjorie Gunn
Marie Kitterman	Mr. & Mrs. George Monheit
Mrs. Vesta Partridge	Rose Marie Pischel
Violet B. Marshall	Lucile Czarnowske

Gifts of remembrance were made to Audubon Nature Training

In Memory of:	Gift of:
Dr. Robert McCulley	George Harpole
A gift to Audubon Nature Training	Diane Robertson

—DR ALBERT BOLES, *Sanctuary and Memorial Fund Chairman*
(please send memorial and honorarium donations directly to Dr. Boles, 854 Longridge Rd., Oakland 94611 (415-6267)

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GOLDEN GATE AUDUBON SOCIETY, INC.

Established January 25, 1917 A Branch of the National Audubon Society since 1948

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Send address changes to Membership Secretary promptly; Post Office does not forward the *GULL*. Monthly meetings—second Thursday 7:30 P.M. Joint membership— local and national $12 per year (individual); $15 (family); includes AUDUBON MAGAZINE and the *GULL;* to join, make check payable to National Audubon Society and send to GGAS office to avoid delay in receiving the *GULL*. Membership renewals should be sent directly to the National Audubon office. Subscriptions to the *GULL* separately $2 per year. High school and college student membership $6 per year.

The *Gull* deadline is the first of the month for the following month.